

About LeeAnn

2003: LeeAnn was awarded a full athletic scholarship to Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland to play Division I Softball. MSU is a historically black university, LeeAnn was the first Caucasian softball player to attend the university.

LeeAnn was a member of the Golden Key Honors Society, Alpha Kappa Delta International Honors Society, National Dean's List, and the National Scholars Honor Society.

2007: LeeAnn graduated at the top of her class, Magna Cum Laude, with a Bachelors of Arts in Sociology with a concentration in Criminal Justice.

7/26/08: Drunk Driver ripped away LeeAnn's dream.



Alpha Kappa Delta International
Honor Society Ceremony

The offender Geremia pleaded guilty to driving under the influence and second-degree assault with a motor vehicle. He was sentenced to eight years suspended after 44 months in prison and five years probation.



Pictured to the left:
LeeAnn walks with her
niece at the Walk Like
MADD 5k event in
Hartford, CT. (2010)



May 2010 LeeAnn gradu-
ates from CCSU. She is
presently working on her
Masters of Science in
Criminal Justice.

Below: LeeAnn featured in a MADD article.



LeeAnn's Legacy

LeeAnn VerTEFEUILLE, an athletic 23-year old college graduate, had her life all planned out until she was seriously injured in an alcohol-related crash on July 26, 2008. LeeAnn was eager to pursue a career in non-traditional law enforcement when a drunk driver tried to pass her motorcycle as she was turning into a driveway, causing such severe injuries that her left leg had to be amputated at the knee. After eight months of hospital care and outpatient rehabilitation, LeeAnn is able to walk with the use of a prosthetic leg. She is currently a graduate student in the Criminal Justice program at Central Connecticut State University. In the future, LeeAnn plans to pursue a career as a victim advocate for crime victims. On June 15, 2010, Glenn Geremia was convicted on the charges of Assault in the 2nd Degree with a Motor Vehicle, Driving Under the Influence and Persistent Felony Offender. He received a sentence of eight years



execution suspended, 44 months to serve and five years probation with numerous conditions of probation.

Today, LeeAnn volunteers as a residential counselor for at-risk youth and is a part-time graduate assistant at CCSU. She is completing a judicial internship with the Office of Victim Services and speaks with Mothers Against Drunk Driving, the University of Connecticut Law School and the Department of Corrections VOICES program to share her story as a victim of drunk driving and how to raise awareness of this growing epidemic.

The Financial Backlash

LEEANN
VERTEFEUILLE

A DUI VICTIMS
STORY

*Her story before,
during and after the
accident.
Life changing injuries,
accident related debts
and challenges that
need to be addressed to
help future victims.*

July 26, 2008



LeeAnn was home for the summer with dreams of becoming a FBI Agent. It was a typical CT summer day, LeeAnn was traveling with two other motorcyclists headed to a cookout and taking a left turn into a residential driveway on Route 198 in Chaplin, CT when she was struck by a motorcycle driven by Glen J. Geremia, 53. Geremia was drunk, speeding and trying to pass Vertefeuille in a no-passing zone on a 1976 Harley-Davidson that was not insured or registered. It was his second drunken driving arrest.

Vertefeuille was critically injured and taken by Life Star helicopter to Hartford Hospital. She suffered from a severely mangled leg, lacerated spleen, several broken bones, among other injuries that led to numerous surgeries. Her leg could not be saved and was later amputated just below the knee.



Financial Burdens

LeeAnn has continued to face financial stresses as a result of this crime. LeeAnn's motorcycle was financed and as a result of the accident it was deemed a total loss. She was left no choice but to continue to pay her monthly payments since the insurance did not cover the loss. Throughout her recovery she had to worry about the financial burdens this accident caused. Up to and even after the verdict LeeAnn has had constant reminders having to deal with debt collectors. Finally, LeeAnn was successful in settling her debt and paying \$3,000.00. An out of pocket expense that should be paid through restitution by the offender. At last she thought this ordeal was over, and yet to her surprise she received a 1099-C Tax Form "Cancellation of debt". The payment she made settling her loan had a significant impact to her tax returns, where she was required to pay an additional \$2,000. The IRS required the debt that was cancelled to be reported as income. With the help of the OVA, LeeAnn was able to find a solution regarding her cancellation of debt, one that wasn't readily recognized to her or most crime victims, but she had to file insolvency.

Actions Needed:

1. Creation of a crime victim debt exclusion for cancellation of debt (1099-C) related to crime.
2. Revisions to the unfair practices of debt collectors to include prevention of victim harassment once the victim is certified through a representative of the state as such.
3. Halt of debt collection until criminal proceedings cease.
4. Transfer of the debt to the defendant.

Collection Issues

The practice of debt collectors viciously going after crime victims, when the defendant has an order of restitution which needs to be enforced.

Crime victims have the right to fairness, respect and restitution in every state - either statutorily, constitutionally or both.

These practices of pursuing the crime victim undermine and obliterate the victims' rights to fairness, respect and restitution.

Restitution from an offender means little if anything to a crime victim; especially when the crime victim's credit has already been destroyed and has suffered by being hounded by the lender and/or debt collectors due to the actions of a criminal.